

INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY USSR

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SUBJECT Prevalent Diseases in Komi Republic/
Lack of Biological Research Facilities/Potato Rot

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4. Diseases most common in the Komi Republic were malaria (P. Vivax), typhoid, paratyphoid, Brills disease typhus and various influenzas.

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a. Malaria (P.Vivax) which produces tertian malaria is very common.

- (1) In the Komi Republic the USSR took no measures to curb mosquito breeding. Consequently, during the warmer months the region is heavily infested with mosquitos bearing the above disease.

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25 YEAR RE-REVIEW

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- (2) To point up the extent of malaria in the area, [] the official census of Komi in 1942 was about 30 thousand free men. The approximately 300 thousand Polish prisoners were not, of course, considered for census purposes. Nevertheless, [] that of the 300 thousand human beings in the area, at least 15 per cent were suffering from P. Vivax type malaria. 25X1
- (3) In laboratory analysis [] no difficulty in determining the disease and the type. [] made a thick drop specimen rather than the usual thin smear easily finding the parasite on the periphery of the blood smear. 25X1
- (4) Since medical care and medicines were free in the USSR, persons suffering from malaria could easily procure quinine in such amounts as the physicians deemed necessary. In most cases the quinine provided, at the best, only temporary relief, for this type of malaria was chronic and in most cases was so advanced that quinine appeared to be ineffective.
- (5) In order to treat the disease some of the free people used an old "home remedy". They consumed quantities of alcohol to which they added pepper, believing this would cure their malaria. Such treatment, of course, created a large number of alcoholics but didn't cure their malaria.

b. Typhoid and paratyphoid

- (1) [] in no position to do cultures, but the above diseases were not difficult to diagnose. 25X1
- (2) Hygiene, particularly personal habits, was primitive. Frankly, very few people used toilet paper, there were no bathing facilities, and very few dwellings contained running water. (Water was carried in buckets from village streams.) Due to such unsanitary conditions, typhoid was contracted by sizeable portions of the population. [] unable to estimate the percentage of sufferers or the treatment administered by physicians. 25X1
- (3) Another source of typhoid (in my estimation) was the communal water. On Sundays the population would go to the community Vannaya [Bath house]. The people arrived home cleansed of dirt but because the bath house was not clean, they also became infested with lice and perhaps germs from the water which was not sterilized or chemically treated.

c. Brill's Disease (typhus)

- (1) The mortality from this disease was always high. It reached its peak, however, when Polish prisoners were freed from various northwestern concentration camps in 1944 and 1945. This disease spread throughout the northwest after the release of the above people. In my estimation, typhus was easily contracted because the population was undernourished and had no facilities to maintain cleanliness.
- (2) The Soviet Government's reactions to the spread of typhus were manifest by the following actions:
- (a) They wouldn't permit statistics to be published -- any such attempt by a scientist was sufficient reason for immediate imprisonment.
 - (b) The government made no official comments on this disease, thereby not revealing through press or other media of communication that the disease was quite rampant.
 - (c) In several instances doctors disappeared from the area, thereby creating the impression that the government had considered these individuals responsible and had them confined in prisons.

d. Influenza

- (1) Influenza was commonplace. Again, we had no laboratory facilities to do research or determine the types.

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(2) Physicians were afraid to make known their diagnosis; therefore, the public had no knowledge concerning the ailment of a friend or relative. [redacted] unable to submit details relative to number of cases or treatment employed by physicians.]

[redacted]

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6.

[redacted] in the Komi Republic patience had its virtues. Instead of planting potatoes in the customary manner, that is in rows, [redacted] planted them in triangular fashioned mounds. Since they were not crowded while growing, [redacted] fine results, [redacted] grown potatoes they were almost as large as the Idaho grown potato. With reference to potato rot, this disease didn't occur while the potatoes were imbedded in the soil. Shortly after the potatoes were harvested and stored, the rot began. This rot first appeared in the form of dark spots on the outer surface. The disease was common in the Komi Republic.

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